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SUBJECT: UNGA 63 CLOSES WITH PARTING SHOTS; UNGA 64 OPENS
QUIETLY

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Outgoing President of the 63rd General Assembly (PGA) Miguel D'Escoto's lengthy farewell address continued his year long theme of criticizing the USG and supporting actions by Venezuela, Bolivia, and Ecuador. In contrast, the brief opening statement of the incoming 64th PGA, Dr. Ali Treki, took a more moderate tone. He talked about the need to reform and democratize the UNGA with a brief mention of the Isreal-Palestinian conflict which served as his most overt political statement. UN SYG briefed members on the upcoming summit on climate change and other concurrent sideline events. Video archives are at www.un.org/webcast/2009.html. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) D'Escoto criticized the "most powerful and influential member states" which pontificate "unashamedly from their privileged seats on the security council" and "act according to the law of the jungle." The U.S. was mentioned specifically, once regarding the five Cuban spies (he labeled as "heroes") that have been "arbitrarily detained for 11 years" and the "threat posed by plans to build seven new U.S. military bases in Colombia." D'Escoto blamed the Palestinian situation on aggression by Israel and suggested that the UN was complicit. D'Escoto had warmer words for other countries, singling out the "victorious and promising Advance of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas," Bolivian President Evo Morales' vision for Mother Earth, and Ecuadorian President Correa's position on the world financial crisis.

¶3. (U) Treki said the "General Assembly must reform to regain its international legitimacy" in order for its resolutions to be implemented. He reprised his call to "reform and democratize the Security Council" - meaning Security Council expansion and a revisit of the veto. He argued that Africa, Latin America and small countries do not have "equitable geographical representation" on the Council although they account for more than half of the world's population. With regard to the Middle East, his view was that the "removal of illegal and illegitimate settlements" by Israel would help lead to peace.

¶4. (SBU) In an informal meeting on September 17, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon updated members on the latest UN issues, specifically focusing on the September 22 Summit on Climate Change and his participation in the G-20 conference in Pittsburgh. He also highlighted the various high level meetings on the sidelines of UNGA such as the Friends of Myanmar meeting September 23, the Friends of Democratic Pakistan meeting September 24, and the Middle East Quartet meeting. After the address, various G-77 delegations expressed their concern over the unique speech format of the Summit on Climate Change, which permits only a handful of heads of state to address the General Assembly.

¶5. (U) The General Assembly adopted the full agenda and allocation of items as outlined in A/64/250 along with other amendments and changes agreed upon earlier in the week by the General Committee. The General Assembly reconfirmed the observer status of the Holy See and Palestine after

President Treki cited the documents creating this precedent.
The General Debate took place September 23-30 (septels); the
General Assembly's Main Committees work programs will follow.
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